



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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20 PERCENT OF CITY'S SEXUAL ASSAULT KIT INVENTORY PROCESSED FOR DNA

MEMPHIS, TN – The Sexual Assault Kit (SAK) Taskforce announced today that as a result of DNA tests performed on 20 percent of kits, 681 investigations have been initiated prompting 117 requests for indictments. These indictments are for either aggravated rape or rape of a child which are Class A felonies punishable by up to 60 years in prison.

Investigators have identified 83 individuals previously convicted of the crime. Also, an additional 78 suspects have been identified with 27 of them being suspects in multiple-cases.

The Taskforce reports 58% of the inventory of 12,374 kits dating back to the 1970s have been analyzed or are at laboratories waiting testing.

Seventy-three percent of investigations initiated, thus far, are closed and include 72 victims who declined to participate, 92 cases past the statute of limitations and 25 with insufficient or degraded DNA.

The Taskforce began tackling the untested kits in the Fall of 2013 and since then has been sending kits to labs as soon as they have the capacity to receive them. The City of Memphis is one among many cities across the country with large numbers of rape kits being sent to labs for DNA testing.

Memphis is one of only a handful of cities in the country to approach their inventory testing efforts with considerable collaboration between the Mayor's office, police, prosecutors, victim advocates and victim service providers. The City has dedicated significant resources to the effort, including a 20-member cross-functional team, multi-agency taskforce, 14 police detectives, two special victim prosecutors and millions of dollars in funding for kit testing and building a new dedicated, state-of-the-art evidence storage facility.

Additionally, the city has convened five community conversations to update, engage and educate the public on kit testing, sexual assault and domestic violence issues, and is mounting a multi-year awareness and prevention campaign called NO MORE.

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The city will host a SAK Summit for Cities on October 19-21, 2015 at Memphis Cook Convention Center to provide a forum for training and sharing of best practices among cities dealing with untested sexual assault kits.

Sexual assault survivors in need of service can call the Memphis and Shelby County Rape Crisis Center at (901) 222 4350.

Those with a case pending and seeking information can call the MPD Hotline at (901) 636-3438.

The Taskforce's monthly report is attached. To view it on-line visit:

<http://www.memphistn.gov/SexualAssaultKitBacklog.aspx>

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Under the leadership of Mayor A C Wharton Jr. since 2009, Memphis is becoming a City of Choice by focusing on creating safe and vibrant neighborhoods, investing in young people, creating economic opportunities for all, and delivering excellence in government. Memphis is famous around the world for the convergence of creativity and innovation that produced its most famous exports – legendary music; the company that invented modern world commerce – FedEx, and the international leader in curing catastrophic childhood illnesses – St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. It has a celebrated entrepreneurial history, more Fortune 500 companies than any other Tennessee city, and it has been named one of the best cities in the U.S. for startups. It is famous as home for Elvis Presley's Graceland, Sun Studios, Stax Museum of American Soul Music, Beale Street, the National Civil Rights Museum, and the most unspoiled riverfront on the Mississippi River. City of Memphis, which employs more than 6,000 people with an annual budget of approximately \$650 million, has developed and led programs that have dramatically reduced crime, increased jobs, improved Memphis' quality of life, and attracted national attention and investments in the city. For more information visit www.memphistn.gov.